

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the office action dated February 13, 2004. This response is believed to address all grounds for rejection stated in the office action.

Assignment of the Case to a Customer Number

Please assign this case to customer number 24490. Additionally please change the correspondence address to the address associated with that customer number.

Amendments to the Claims

All claims other than the three objected claims are canceled without prejudice to enable allowance of the allowable subject matter. Applicant respectfully disagrees that Fortenberry or Ho or other references disclose, motivate or suggest individually or in combination the key aspects of the currently canceled independent claims. Accordingly, Applicant wishes to continue prosecution of these claims after the instant application is allowed with the subject matter presently deemed allowable.

Importantly, Fortenberry at the cited portions does not disclose assigning at least one of a plurality of security levels to each information object, and the office action appears to have incorrectly construed the following language in Fortenberry.

Referring now to FIG. 5, a flowchart illustrating the process steps for providing access to a users internet passport via passport agent is illustrated. The coding of the process steps of the flowchart of FIG. 5 into instructions suitable to control passport agent 216, web site 210 and user 208 will be understood by those ordinary skill in the art of programming. First, the user requests a transaction with a particular vendor, i.e., web site 210, as illustrated by process block 502. Next, the user provides a public key to the vendor, as illustrated in process block 504. The public key was previously provided to the user by passport agent 216. Next, the user requests that passport agent 216 send the user's passport to the vendor, as illustrated by process block 506. This message is encrypted with a security key obtained by the user via a secured method. The vendor requests relevant information contained in the user

environment variables from the passport agent, as illustrated by process block 508. The request for information is specified in the message as follows: RELEASE-TYPE TO INTERNET-SITE ON BEHALF OF MY-USER-ID. For example, when requesting the passport agent to release social security number information, the message looks like: RELEASE SOCIAL-SECURITY-NUMBER TO WEB-SITE-X ON BEHALF OF MY-USER-ID. Passport agent 216 receives the request for the information, as illustrated by process block 510 and, based on the security level of the identified information, determines whether or not the requested information should be transmitted to the vendor in encrypted form, as illustrated by decisional block 512. If the information is to be encrypted, an encryption process is carried out by passport agent 216, as illustrated by process block 514.

Fortenberry does not enable assigning at least one of a plurality of security levels to each information object. Based on the description provided, the office action, see page 4, states that this disclosed the step of "security levels can be assigned so as to allow individually selected portions of the information objects to be released to different receiving parties." But this description in Fortenberry states that one could explicitly request the release of social security number to a web site using a public key that an owner of the information might provide a requester. But the usage of the security level is not to enable selection of information objects, but to decide "whether or not the requested information should be transmitted to the vendor in encrypted form". Thus, the Office Action generously construed Fortenberry for more than what it actually stands. Reconsideration is requested as to this issue, but the arguments will be made in a continuing application.

Conclusion

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 50, 51 and 76 have allowable subject matter. These claims are amended to incorporate all the features of the independent claims from which they depend. This response addresses all grounds for rejection of claims in the Office Action. In view of the aforementioned arguments, applicant believes that all currently pending claims

in the instant are patentable over the cited art. A Petition for extension of time for one month and a fee of \$55 for the extension are also enclosed. Before closing the prosecution on the merits, Applicants request notice so that they could file a continuation application resurrecting the presently canceled claims.

Respectfully Submitted,


(44,602)
Naren Chaganti
432 S. Curson Ave, Ste. 12 H
Los Angeles, CA 90036
(650) 248-7011 phone
naren@chaganti.com E-mail

Applicant

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I certify that this paper is mailed to the USPTO on the date indicated below.

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Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

June 14, 2004
Date


NAREN CHAGANTI